Elite Ethnic Koreans in Japanese-Dominated Manchukuo: A Case Study Based on the Thomas Gregory Song Papers

Research Thesis

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I. Introduction

Thomas Gregory Song (1929 - 2014) was born in Tokyo to Korean parents and raised in Japanese-occupied Dairen (present-day Dalian City, Liaoning Province of the People's Republic of China).[1] For much of his early life, Song moved between countries and ideologies. He began life in the Empire of Japan (1868-1945) and witnessed the rise and decline of Japanese power in the northeastern Asia region. In 1946, Song moved to Seoul and took a job with the United States Army Military Government in Korea (USAMGIK) before emigrating to the United States in 1948. His experiences, preserved within his personal papers (hereafter the TGS Papers), illustrate the ways in which some elite ethnic Koreans concurrently collaborated with and resisted Japanese domination.

By contextualizing Song's experiences within existing scholarship on Manchurian history and local-level collaboration, this paper embraces a bottom-up approach to examine the lives of Koreans in the Japanese empire.[2] Past research has approached this topic from an administrative perspective by relying on demographic data, legal status, living standards, and working conditions to explore the lives of Koreans in Japanese-occupied Manchuria.[3] Comparatively less research has adopted a bottom-up perspective based on records written by Koreans themselves. By applying Timothy Brook's theories on collaboration to evidence

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[1] Thomas Gregory Song's Korean name was Song Jae-dong (송재동) and Japanese name was Hiroshi Kohara (小原博). I have yet to find an explanation for how he chose his English names "Thomas" and "Gregory."

[2] For a multi-layered analysis of the decisions and motivations of people living under Japanese domination, see Timothy Brook, *Collaboration: Japanese Agents and Local Elites in Wartime China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005).

[3] For related research utilized in this thesis, see Robert Burnett Hall, "The Geography of Manchuria," *The Annals of American Academy of Political and Social Science* (1930) Vol. 152, Nobuo Murakoshi, and Glenn T. Trewartha, "Land Utilization Map of Manchuria" *Geographical Review* (1930) Vol. 20 No. 3, John R. Stewart, "Japan's Strategic Settlements in Manchukuo," *Far Eastern Survey* (1939) Vol. 8 No.4, Annika C. Culver, "The Making of Japanese Avant-Garde in Colonial Dairen, 1924-1937," *History Compass* 5, no. 2 (2007), Mizuuchi Toshio 水内俊雄 "Syokuminchi Toshi Dairen no Toshikeisei—Senhappyaku kyuujyuukyuu kara Senkyuhyaku yonnjyuugo" 植民地都市大連の都市形成—1899~1945 [Establishment of Dairen, a colonial city, 1899~1945], *Jinbun Chiri* 人文地理 37, no. 5 (1985), and so on. "Elite ethnic Koreans" is defined as the tiny segment of those ethnic Koreans enjoying higher socioeconomic and occupational advantages in Manchuria. By 1940, there were "1,400,000" ethnic Koreans in Manchuria, and the percentage of elite ethnic Koreans was estimated as 1-2 percent of them. As for the number of 1,400,000, see Frank Jacob, "The Korean Diaspora in Manchuria-Korean Ambitions, Manchurian Dreams, Japanese Realities," *UPF Journal of World History* (2014) Vol.6.

gathered from the TGS Papers, this paper argues that Song and his family exemplify a process of simultaneous assistance and resistance to Japanese occupation.

As mentioned above, the TGS Papers—which are open to researchers at The Ohio State University's Columbus Campus—form the primary source base for this study.[4] This collection of documents covers multiple generations' experiences, is written from Song's point of view, and includes multi-lingual correspondence between Song and acquaintances on a diverse set of topics. Given the collection's wide scope, the TGS Papers are a valuable resource for scholars interested in uncovering the lived experience of Koreans in Manchuria. That being said, as with any source base, the TGS Papers contain blind spots and potential hazards for careless researchers. For example, the material covering Song's adolescence was published long after the time in question—mostly in 2001 and 2002—and makes up a smaller percentage of the total documents than those relating to his adult life. While writing in his seventies (Western age), Song did his best to recall childhood events with some specificity, but researchers should approach these recollections with a healthy skepticism. Despite some lingering ambiguity and occasional inaccuracy in Song's memory of the 1930s and early 1940s, when combined with other available resources such as scholarly works on the period, his story remains a valuable historical resource.

Additionally, this is a multi-lingual source base. To fully engage with the TGS Papers, researchers should have advanced language abilities in English, Japanese, Mandarin Chinese, and Korean, as well as some knowledge of Esperanto. Finally, it is important to note that the image of the Song family reproduced from the TGS Papers does not represent a monolithic bloc of ethnic Koreans in Manchuria. Thomas Song's family held an elite status in Dairen and can hardly be considered representative of all Koreans in the Japanese empire, because the occupation for majorities of ethnic Koreans was mainly farming and rice cultivation.

[4] Note on Romanization: This thesis utilizes documents from the TGS Papers, which include documents written in Japanese, Korean, English, and Mandarin Chinese, and engages with academic work by scholars working on East Asia. I will use Hepburn Romanization for Japanese sources, Pinyin for Chinese-language material, and Revised Romanization for Korean terms and sources. For materials written in Japanese, Korean and Mandarin Chinese, all translations are my own.

Consequently, the TGS Papers can offer only one specific example of Koreans living under Japanese occupation.

This thesis is organized into two parts. The first introduces Thomas Song and his family. This overview, which includes genealogical records, establishes the Song family as having been among an elite class of ethnic Koreans and illustrates the extent to which Thomas Song's parents embraced mobility as a strategy to achieve and maintain socioeconomic status in the Japanese empire. This background information is essential for readers to understand the subsequent examination of the Song family's experience living under Japanese occupation in Manchuria, which is taken up in the second part. By delving into the Songs' family life in Manchuria and placing material from the TGS Papers into the larger context of Manchurian history, Part Two highlights the in-betweenness (as in many instances of people who mediate between two groups) of Song's family in colonial society and explores how they engaged in simultaneous acts of collaboration and resistance.

II. The Song Family's Elite Status

This section argues that the Song family's Eunjin Clan, of which Thomas Song was a member, had long-established itself as an elite family in Korean society. Although the political turbulence of the early twentieth century denied Song's parents the traditional benefits of their elite status, they took advantage of opportunities available for advancement by studying and working in Japan. In this way, the geographic, socioeconomic, and occupational mobility of Thomas Song's immediate family was both a strategy to thrive in, and a consequence of, a politically tumultuous era. Through this detailed explanation of how the Song family leveraged geographic, socioeconomic, and occupational mobility to maintain its socioeconomic and occupational elite status, this section supports the central argument of this project: that the Song family's experience in Manchuria from 1934 until 1946 illustrates the ability of elite ethnic Koreans to simultaneously collaborate and resist. The story of Song's parents makes clear that the political turmoil of the early 20th century allowed for the acquisition of elite status by some mobile Koreans within the relatively recent structures of the Japanese empire.

Thomas Song, born in 1929, was a member of the twenty-fifth generation of the Song family's Eunjin Clan (은진송시/恩津宋氏) whose *bon-gwan* (본관/本貫) was rooted in Eunjin Myeon, Nansan City of South Chungcheong Province (충청남도/忠淸南道) on the Korean peninsula.[5] *Bon-gwan* represents the concept of a clan in Korea, and it is used to distinguish other clans that share family names. A group of people sharing the same paternal ancestor are combined into one *bon-gwan*. For generations, members of the Eunjin Clan occupied elite positions within Korean society, serving both the Goryeo Dynasty (918 - 1392) and the Joseon Dynasty (1392 - 1910). Several of Thomas Song's ancestors achieved high political status, such as county prefect (e.g. Song Dok-Ju/宋得珠 /송독주, undated, the second generation of the Eunjin Clan), court justice (Song Dae-Oeon/宋大原 /송대원, undated, the first generation of the Eunjin Clan), a Minister of Ancestral Rituals (Song Yu/宋愉/송유, 1389 - 1446, the sixth generation of the Eunjin Clan), a Minister of Justice (Song Kyeo-Sa/ 宋継祀/ 송계사, 1407 -?, the seventh generation of the Eunjin Clan), a Minister of Internal Affairs (Song Ki-Tae/ 宋基泰 /송기대, 1629 - 1711, the fifteenth generation of the Eunjin Clan), a city governor (Song Yo-Hae/ 宋汝諧/송여해, 1452 - 1510, the ninth generation of the Eunjin Clan), and a prime minister (Song Si-Ryeol/ 宋時烈/송시렬, 1607 - 1689, the fourteenth generation of the Eunjin Clan).[6] Song's genealogy, which lists family members with office titles, illustrates the family's ability to qualify for public office, evidence of its ability to build on its hereditary elite status through much of Korea's recent dynastic history. Japan's annexation of Korea (renamed Chosen) in 1910, however, disrupted the traditional class structure of Korean society—thereby interfering with the Song family's historical claims to its status. [7]

Prior to annexation, the Joseon caste system (*sin-bun* 身份/신분) divided Korean society into six groups: *Yangban* (aristocrats, 両班/양반), *Jung-in* (middle people, 中人/중인), *Sangmin* (commoners, 常民/상민), *Cheonmin* (vulgar commoners, 賤民/청민), *Baekjeong*

[5] A group of people sharing the same paternal ancestor are combined into one *bon-gwan*. For example, in Thomas Gregory Song's case, his family is from the line of the Song family that settled in Eunjin Myeon of South Chungcheong Province. Thus, his *bon-gwan* is the Song family's Eunjin Clan (은진송시/恩津宋氏).
[6] Song, *Chronology of Song of Eunjin in America,* undated, SPEC RARE.0195, Box 17 Folder 28, TGS Papers.
[7] Chosen (朝鮮) was the Japanese name for the former kingdom of Korea, a part of the Japanese empire, from 1910 to 1945. Therefore, ethnic Koreans were addressed as Chosenjin (朝鮮人).

(untouchables, 白丁/백정), and *Nobi* (slaves, 奴婢/노비). Civil servants and military officers were composed of people who successfully passed the civil service exam, and only those in the Yangban ranks were eligible to take this exam. According to Song's genealogical records, it is apparent that his ancestors belonged to the Yangban class because they occupied several key government posts only attainable after passing the civil service exams.

However, with the onset of Japanese rule came a new framework for defining social status. In 1909, Japan introduced a family registration system called the *Koseki* System (戸籍). According to the *Koseki* System, each subject of the Japanese empire in Korea "belonged to an *ie* (family, 家), the unit of registration, and each *ie* has its own *honseki* (place of origin, 本籍)."[8] This method of family registration redefined the Korean class system at its root because each Korean was registered not by status, as it had been under the Joseon Caste System, but by family and place of origin. Whereas the earlier system had ranked families into a clear hierarchy, the Japanese system nominally equalized the population by registering Koreans "regardless of status, class, or gender differences."[9] In practice, however, the replacement of the Joseon Caste System by the *Koseki* System did not result in the equalization of economic status among all Koreans. The fortunate, which included Thomas Song's family, continued to access educational and economic advantages by attending school or working in Japan.

To survive and thrive in the Japanese empire, the Song family became more mobile and flexible—in both geography and allegiance. Multiple members of the Eunjin Clan extended their loyalties to Japan, offering rationales that ranged from desires to modernize Korea to profit-seeking to mere survival. Subsequently, some members were officially recognized as aristocrats in the Japanese empire. According to an interview given by Thomas Song in 2013, "[the] Song Family [of the Eunjin Clan] was split into six branches, and one of [Song's uncles] claimed the title of [baron, viscount, and count]."[10] This example of early-20th century diaspora

[8] Jaeeun Kim, "The Colonial State, Migration, and Diasporic Nationhood in Korea," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 56, no. 1 (2014): 42.
[9] Kim, "The Colonial State, Migration, and Diasporic Nationhood in Korea," 43.
[10] Thomas Gregory Song, interview by Mary Domin, *Dartmouth College Oral History Program of Dartmouth Community and Dartmouth's World*, Dartmouth Library, January 20, 2013, PDF file, https://www.dartmouth.edu/~library/rauner/archives/oral_history/community/transcripts/Song_Thomas_Interview.

among Song's parents' generation reveals the onset of shifting transnational allegiances and geographic, socioeconomic, and occupational mobility in the Song family history. Issues of migration were not limited to Thomas Song's personal story, but were rather a legacy that Song inherited as a member of the Song family caught in the political intrigue and tumult of Japanese colonization and modernization in Korea starting in 1910.

Thomas Song's father, Song U-Hon (宋愚憲/ 송우헌, 1897 - 1975), was born in the short-lived Empire of Korea (1897-1910). Like his ancestors, Song U-Hon took advantages of new opportunities available to wealthy Koreans in the Empire of Japan and moved, first to Japan for his education, and then throughout the empire to advance his career. Song U-Hon earned an undergraduate degree from the College of Engineering, Nihon University (日本大学) in 1927 and worked as a lecturer at Keijo (京城) Imperial University[11] and Ewha (梨花) Woman's College,[12] before landing an engineering job with the Ministry of Railways (MoR) in Tokyo. In 1934, Song U-Hon obtained a position as a chief engineer for the South Manchuria Railway Company (SMRC), located in what was, by then, part of the Japanese-sponsored state of Manchukuo. He moved his young family to Dairen in the Japanese empire's Kwantung Leased Territory, where they remained until 1946.[13] In the context of Japanese colonization, Song U-Hon's life story illustrates how his geographic, socioeconomic, and occupational mobility allowed him to pursue professional and personal ambitions.

Thomas' mother, So Jong-Ah (徐延兒/서정아,1905 - 1995), also traveled across boundaries at critical intervals throughout her lifetime. She was born in Suwon City (수원시/水原市), Gyeonggi Province (경기도/京畿道), to a merchant family and won a Governor's

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pdf (accessed on January 20, 2018). Kazoku was bureaucratic peerage of the Japanese empire, and the ranking was prince, marquess, count, viscount, and baron. According to what Song explains, one of his uncles was a baron, then given the title of viscount, and eventually became a count.

[11] Present-day Seoul National University. It was established in 1924 as one of the imperial universities of the Empire of Japan. After 1945, this university was closed but reopened after joining with other universities and changing its name to Seoul National University. Today, it is one of the best universities in ROK.

[12] Present-day Ewha Women's University in Seoul, Republic of Korea. It was established on May 31st, 1868, as Ewha Haktang, and it started to offer college courses since 1910. Song U-hon was a lecturer there from 1922 to 1924.

[13] After 1932, the Japanese empire still treated the Kwantung Leased Territory differently from Manchukuo, and the administration of the Kwantung Leased Territory was conducted by the Kwantung Bureau (關東廳), a subordinate organization of the Ministry of Colonial Affairs of the Japanese empire. .

scholarship to pursue higher education in the Japanese metropole. She met Song U-Hon during his appointment at Ewha Women's College (they would later be married in Tokyo) before entering Tokyo's Imperial Women's Medical College in 1925.[14] She graduated in 1933 and began her career as a doctor at the Imperial Women's Medical College hospital. In 1934, she relocated with her husband and two children to Dairen, taking a position at an SMRC-affiliated hospital. In 1939, So Jong-Ah left the employ of SMRC to open her own practice, which she maintained until relocating to Seoul in 1946. When the Korean War (1950 - 1953) broke out, she again moved her clinic, this time to Jeju Island, before returning to Seoul in 1953 where she ran her clinic until 1975. In 1981, she moved to Pennsylvania to live with her son, Thomas Song, until her death on October 5, 1995. Like her husband, So Jong-Ah's life story is an example of how some Koreans embraced a mobile life to pursue a secure and prosperous life against a backdrop of political turmoil and war.

Thomas Song was the eldest of Song U-Hon and So Jong-Ah's two children. Like their parents, the Song children embraced geographic, socioeconomic, and occupational mobility as a strategy to maintain and improve their lots in life. Born in Tokyo in 1929, Thomas Song moved to Manchuria with his family in 1934. He spent his adolescence in Dairen and received a Japanese education at Komeidai Primary School, Dairen Junior High School, and Lüshun High School, where ethnic Japanese students formed the majority of the schools' populations.[15] Song's childhood in Dairen set the stage for a future of continued mobility and life as an ethnic minority.

The Empire of Japan collapsed in 1945, resulting in the liberation of the Korean peninsula, Taiwan, Manchuria, the Kwantung Leased Territory. However, the end of the Japanese empire also marked the beginning of a new power struggle between the victors of World War II—the United States and the Soviet Union. This change in the world order

[14] The Imperial Women's Medical College (帝国女子医学専門学校/ていこくじょしいがくせんもんがっこう) was established in 1925 in Tokyo. In 1950, it was reorganized as the Tōhō University(東邦大学/とうほうだいがく), one of Tokyo's private universities.

[15] Thomas Gregory Song トーマス・ソング, "Tokyo, Dairen, Seouru soshite Nyu yoku" 東京、大連、ソウル、そしてニューヨーク[Tokyo, Dairen, Seoul, and New York], *Tosho Shimbun* 図書新聞, January 1, 2001, SPEC RARE.0195, Box 12 Folder 6, Thomas Gregory Song Papers (hereafter TGS Papers), Rare Books and Manuscripts Library, The Ohio State University, Columbus, OH.

precipitated Song's re-immigration to Korea (fig. 1). When the Imperial Japanese Army withdrew from Manchuria in 1945, the Soviet Red Army, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), and the Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) became the new occupiers of the vast territory. After witnessing the fall of Dairen into Soviet hands, the Song family fled to US-occupied Seoul in 1946.

When the Song family arrived in Seoul, southern Korea was controlled by the United States Army Military Government in Korea (USAMGIK), commanded by Lt. General John R. Hodge. Song started his career as a secretary to a Major Kennedy of USAMGIK. Although Song did not read, write, or understand Korean, his professional typing skills and command of English (acquired in Dairen) won him a ticket to work for USAMGIK and the opportunity to establish good relations with his American counterparts. While working in Seoul, Song made several close American friends—including Robert Shea, in 1947. Shea, an American soldier responsible for the security of the Seoul-Pusan railroad line, would later play a critical role in Song's departure to the United States. Like his parents, Thomas Song too embraced mobility and took advantage of geopolitical realities to improve his quality of life by establishing connections and working with those who could help him move forward.

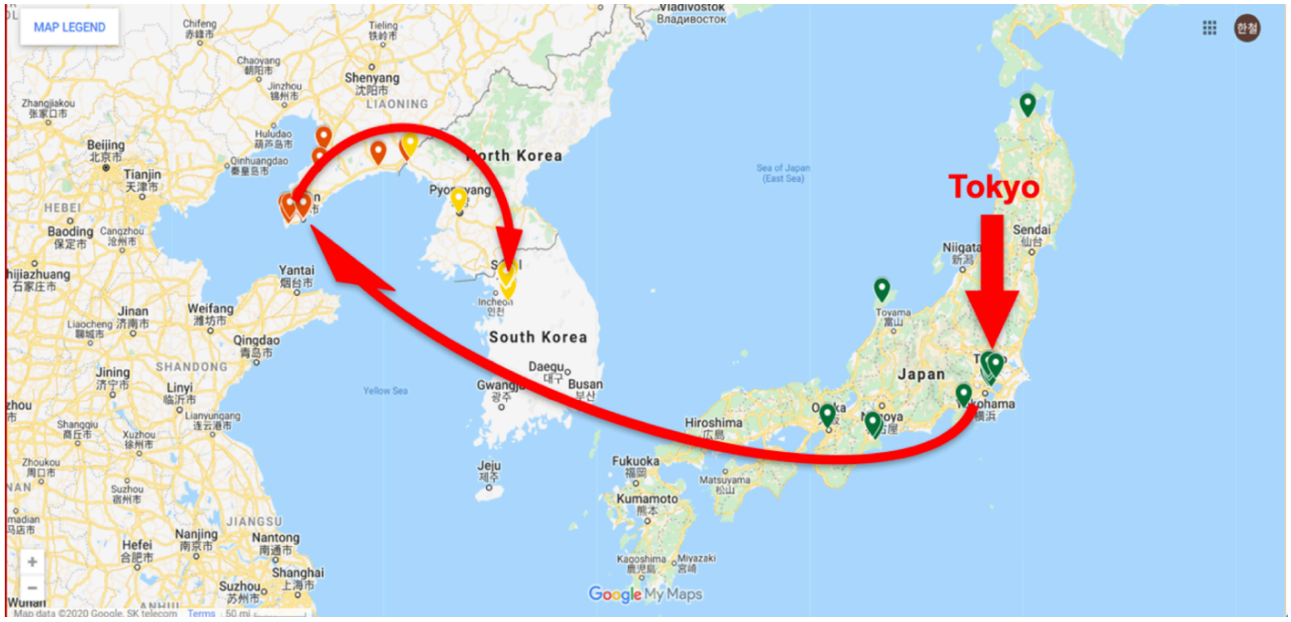

Figure 1. Map showing Thomas Song's Migration, 1929 to 1946. Song was born in Tokyo and moved to Dairen in 1934. He lived in Dairen with his family until 1946, when they fled to Seoul. This map offers an approximation of the route followed by the Song family and the mobility of Song. To clarify, from Dairen to Seoul, the Song family

migrated by a salt smuggling boat, not via land. Courtesy of Hanchul Bae, “Slide 9: Koreans in Manchuria and the Question of the National Identity of Thomas Song’s Family,” presented at The Ohio State University, February 6, 2020.

Only twenty months after arriving in Seoul, with the help of Robert Shea, Song set out for the United States. On August 20, 1948, Song U-Hon accompanied his son to Seoul’s Kimpo Airport and presented him with a message saying, "It was our [Song U-hon and So Jong-Ah] responsibility that we raised you as a Japanese [and not Korean]. You did nothing wrong…there can be no future [for you] in Korea; thus you should forget us, forget Asia and create your future on your own [in the United States]…as your parents, what we can only do is to send you out from Asia."[16] Holding a boarding pass and a USAMGIK-issued temporary ID bearing his Korean name, Song departed Asia for North America.

Upon his arrival in Boston, Song settled in with Robert Shea’s family, who were themselves children of Irish immigrants. The Sheas lived in a suburban community where immigrant families made up nearly half of the population. Despite this high percentage of immigrants, Song later recalled that most of his neighbors at that time were "second or third generation immigrants whose English was much more fluent than their native language."[17] And yet, "[they] treated me, a foreign-born man with different ethnicity, making me feel (sic) like a real family member…[I had] finally arrived in America."[18]

Song also continued his high school education in Boston. He attended the Newman Preparatory School, "sponsor[ed] by a Boston College alumni group who were friends of Newman's founders…[as] the first international student."[19] Restricted by his one-year student visa and financial limitations, Song completed a curriculum designed for two years in less than one year with straight A’s. After completing his preparatory education, Song received a full

[16] Ibid.
[17] Thomas Gregory Song トーマス・ソング, “Bosuton Sheike no Koto Jyou” ボストン、シェイ家のこと（上）[Boston, Shea family (one)], *Tosho Shimbun* 図書新聞, January 13, 2001, SPEC RARE.0195, Box 12 Folder 6, TGS Papers.
[18] Ibid.
[19] Present-day Newman School in Boston. It was established in 1945 on the centennial of John Henry Cardinal Newman’s conversion to Roman Catholicism. The school’s purpose was to offer preparatory courses of higher education for WWII veterans. Thomas Song, the first international student to attend this school, was not sponsored by the GI Bill. However, Song did gain benefits from GI Bill when he left the U.S. Army in 1956 and continued graduate school in Michigan. "History of Newman School," https://www.newmanboston.org/about/history-of-newman-school, accessed February 4, 2020.

scholarship to Dartmouth College in Hanover, New Hampshire, where he enrolled as a student in the Class of 1953. After graduating in 1935 with a B.A. in Mathematics, Song went on to study philosophy and library science in the Graduate School at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor.

While Song was pursuing higher education in the United States, the international Cold War was escalating. According to historian Eric Foner, the Cold War "encouraged a culture of security and dishonesty," and in the United States a large number of suspected communist sympathizers were swept up in the Red Scare.[20] Unfortunately for Song, he too got caught up in investigations of suspected communists by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS). In 1955, he was jailed in Detroit, Michigan but made bail after staying in jail for only ten days.

After his release, Song returned to Ann Arbor where friends helped him to begin the process of obtaining American citizenship. In the same year, he was drafted into the U.S. Army and assigned to the Fifth Armored Division out of Fort Chaffee, Arkansas where he served as secretary to the squadron commander. In 1956, Song's naturalization application was approved, and he officially became a U.S. citizen. Not only was Song now a new American citizen, this was the first time he enjoyed the full rights of citizenship in any nation since he had not had official citizenship during his stays in Tokyo, Dairen, or Seoul.

In 1961, Song completed his graduate work at the University of Michigan, earning master's degrees in Philosophy and Library Science. After graduating, he took a job at the library of Detroit's Oakland University. In 1964, he moved to Wayne State University where he worked as a researcher until 1967. From Wayne State University, he moved to Yale University where he stayed until securing a position as Associate Librarian at Bryn Mawr College in 1969. Song remained at Bryn Mawr until 1987 and played a critical role in introducing the computer system to the college's library and expanding its collections. In 2001, Song recalled that the

[20] Eric Foner, *Give Me Liberty: An American History* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2015), 971.

Bryn Mawr College Library was "one of the first university libraries in [the State of Pennsylvania] to connect to the OCLC [Online Computer Library Center]."[21] Song's career trajectory demonstrates the importance of geographic, socioeconomic, and occupational mobility for his advancement. Even in the United States, where political turmoil was less threatening than it had been in East Asia, he continued to embrace geographic, socioeconomic, and occupational mobility to secure new educational and career opportunities.

This brief summary of the Song family's educational and career choices demonstrates the ways in which family members advanced their elite social status against shifting political backdrops. As the Empire of Japan supplanted the Empire of Korea after 1910, Song's parents leveraged their mobility to gain socioeconomic advantages within the empire. When the Empire of Japan fell, Thomas Song took advantage of his language skills to forge connections with the American occupation army and smooth his path across the Pacific. For Thomas Song and his parents, their geographic, socioeconomic and occupational mobility was both the consequence of geopolitical developments and a strategy to preserve the elite status of the Song family. It demonstrates the ways in which members take advantage of the opportunities offered by shifting political turmoil, such as the Song parents' sojourn to Japan.

III. The Song Family's Interaction with Empire

Having established that the Song family moved within the Empire of Japan to secure its position in society, this section examines the ways in which Thomas Song and his parents interacted with the empire. It argues that the Song family is one example of how elite ethnic Koreans simultaneously collaborated with and resisted Japan's occupation of Manchuria.[22] This section relies on theoretical foundations about collaboration and resistance laid by Timothy Brook to offer a definition of collaboration. In what follows, I mine the TGS Papers to explore how the Song family's interactions with the Japanese empire in Manchuria fits with Brook's model.

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[21] Thomas Gregory Song トーマス・ソング, "Nyuheibun to fuiraderufuia" ニューヘイブンとフイラデルフィア [New Haven and Philadelphia], *Tosho Shimbun* 図書新聞, October 27, 2001, SPEC RARE.0195, Box 12 Folder 6, TGS Papers. By coincidence, OCLC was first created at The Ohio State University, where the TGS Papers now reside.

[22] About the details of ethnic Koreans, see footnote 3.

A. Collaboration: A Simple Word but Sophisticated Phenomenon

There can be no empire without local cooperation. Collaboration is the result of a series of sophisticated and serious cost-benefit calculations undertaken by individuals placed under the domination of an empire. Timothy Brook defines collaboration as "the word by which we denigrate political cooperation with an occupying force" with an emphasis on "the continuing exercise of power under the pressure produced by the presence of an occupying power"[23] In the context of Manchuria and the Song family, collaboration took the form of cooperation between a Korean family and Japanese administrators.

This part of the argument begins from Brook's assumption that occupiers and collaborators are mutually dependent upon one another. Foreign occupiers require the cooperation of local people who are familiar with the language and culture of newly conquered territory to persuade locals to obey the new regime. On the other side, collaborators desire to maintain some semblance of normalcy in their daily lives and to take advantage of new opportunities brought by foreign occupation. Brook describes this relationship as one in which "the occupier needs material support and at least a willingness not to resist, which non-collaborators have to give to survive, and on which collaborators in turn must rely to function."[24] Lihua Wang and Nancy K. Stakler have both drawn similar conclusions in their own work—Wang in his assertion that Chinese men facilitated the sexual slavery of women in the Japanese empire and Stakler in her assessment of Japan's successful establishment of a colonial enterprise.[25]

Given the existence of a co-dependent relationship between occupiers and collaborators, Brook points to four areas in which historians should exercise caution when analyzing issues of collaboration: nationalism, politics, humanitarianism, and morality. Embracing any one of these tends to produce analyses that over-emphasize the hero/traitor binary (which is why they are

[23] Brook, 1-2.
[24] Brook, 29.
[25] For Lihua Wang and Nancy K. Stakler's assertions, see Lihua Wang, "No Empire Without Collaborators," *Women's Review of Books* (2013) Vol. 32 No.5, and Nancy K. Stakler, *Japan: History and Culture from Classical to Cool* (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2018).

often perspectives that are embraced by victorious resistance powers to legitimize their rule and criticize their opponents). Additionally, it is important to highlight that the majority of any given population living under occupation by a foreign force displays nearly equal indifference to the occupiers, collaborators, and resistance movements. The primary concerns of most people are the maintenance of daily life and a stable income.[26]

Building from this discussion of collaboration as indispensable for the maintenance of a vast empire on the part of the conqueror and as an end result of cost-benefit calculations on the part of the collaborator, the remainder of this section explores the relationship between the Song family and the Japanese empire. Having established a working definition of collaboration, the next part analyzes how the Songs, as an elite family, contributed to the Japanese domination of Manchuria. It illustrates how Song U-Hon and So Jong-Ah, although members of an ethnic minority, occupied a comparatively elite position in Manchuria's colonial society and cooperated with Japanese administration of the territory.

B. The Song Family's contribution to Japanese domination of Manchuria

Before contextualizing the Song family's experience in Manchuria, some general background on Japan's colonial project is necessary—beginning with the history of the South Manchuria Railway Company (SMRC). According to the historian James L. Huffman, the SMRC was one of two critical organizations responsible for securing Imperial Japan's occupation of Manchuria (the other organization was the Kwantung Army). Additionally, the SMRC was Manchuria's "most impressive railroad system [with] a network of mines, power plants, ports, and farms…[and] revenues [that] totaled 34 million [Japanese] yen annually."[27] To serve its military and economic functions, the SMRC also boasted some of the most advanced rail technology in the region. According to Longbao Tsai, the SMRC's technological capabilities "were incomparable with the railway companies in Chosen and Taiwan," noting that "its industrial design of express trains even inspired the development of the Japanese bullet

[26] Brook, 247.
[27] James L Huffman, *Japan in World History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020), 99-100.

train (Shinkansen [1964]).”[28] In short, the SMRC represented a pillar of Japanese dominance in Manchuria.

The SMRC’s significance to the Empire of Japan eclipsed that of most private corporations. Since its establishment in 1906, the SMRC existed as a “semi-official” company that supported the expansion of Japanese influence over the vast territory of Manchuria.[29] Kuniko Kayano has described how the SMRC owned “key industries in Manchuria” and expanded its operations in the region “by running railways and affiliated factories, hotels, mining, steel industry, Dairen port, research of agriculture and technology, consultations of economic policy, and facilities related to education.”[30] In other words, SMRC did not limit its involvement to the management of rail systems; it involved itself in nearly every aspect of Manchuria’s governance. As a semi-public enterprise, the SMRC benefited not only from its holdings in Manchuria; it also served as a platform for the Kwantung Army to allocate resourses. Investments in the company undoubtedly strengthened Japan’s administration of the territory.[31]

Before delving into material on the Song family’s position in Manchuria’s colonial society, a brief introduction to the ethnic composition of Japan’s empire is required. The number of Koreans in Dairen and other cities of Manchuria increased even before the establishment of Manchukuo in 1931. According to Takao Matsumura, a Japanese economist whose work focuses on labor in the Japanese empire, the population of Koreans living in Manchuria increased to approximately 234,413

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[28] Tsai Longbao 蔡龍保 “Pingjie Gao Chengfeng ‘Zhihmindi tiedao to minzhong shenghuo—Chaoxian, Taiwan, Zhongguodongbei’” 評介高成鳳《殖民地鉄道と民眾生活—朝鮮，台灣，中國東北》[A book review of Kao Cheng-feng’s *colonial railway and people’s life: Chosen, Taiwan, and Manchuria*], *Taiwan Shida lishi xuebao* 台灣師大歷史學報 34 (2006): 228.

[29] K. K. Kawakami, “Manchurian Backgrounds I,” *Pacific Affairs* 5, No. 2 (1932):113.

[30] Kuniko Kayano 小谷野　邦子 “Manshu niokeru Shinrigaku: Zenhanki ni okeru Jinbutsuwo Chushin toshote” 「満洲」における心理学—前半期における人物を中心として [Development of psychology in Manchuria: Concentrating on key figures in the first half period of Manchuria], *Ibaraki Kirisutokyo Daigaku Kiyou* 茨城キリスト教大学紀要 35 (2001): 166.

[31] S. C. M. Paine, *The Japanese Empire: Grand Strategy from the Meiji Restoration to the Pacific War* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 117.

between 1910 to 1931.[32] After the establishment of Manchukuo, Korean migration to Manchuria continued, with the number of Koreans reaching a total of 320,878 by 1944.[33] In terms of distribution, the majority of Koreans in Manchuria lived in northern Manchuria, "served by the Chinese Eastern Railway – a line at least partly owned by Russia" and centered on the city of Harbin.[34] The Song family was part of a minority population of Koreans located in the port city of Dairen in southern Manchuria.

Beyond population distribution, the occupations of Thomas Song's parents further distinguished them from the majority of Koreans in Manchuria. Most ethnic Koreans in Manchuria engaged in physical labor such as rice cultivation or by performing "preparatory work in opening up the land for Japanese colonies."[35] The nature of their position in Manchurian society meant that most ethnic Koreans maintained a lower standard of living than the Japanese.[36] However, as shown in the first section, Thomas Song's Japanese-educated parents were not agricultural laborers. When Song U-Hon relocated to Dairen, it was as a mechanical engineer employed by the SMRC; So Jong-Ah was also able to work in the SMRC-affiliated hospital. Consequently, the Song family enjoyed a relatively higher status than most of the ethnic Koreans in Manchuria—which is a reminder that their experience was not representative.

Although the Song family represented a tiny elite segment of the Korean population in Manchuria and, by virtue of Japan's 1910 annexation of Korea, were legally Japanese nationals, in practice they remained second-class citizens in the

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[32] Matsumura Tatao 松村高夫 "Nihon Teikokusyugikani Okeru 'Manshu' heno Chosenjinido ni Tsuite" 日本帝国主義下における「満州」への朝鮮人移動について [Migration of the Koreans to 'Manchuria' under Japanese imperialism], *Keio Journal of Economics* 63, no. 6 (1970): 441.
[33] Matsumura, 505.
[34] Nobuo Murakoshi, and Glenn T. Trewartha, "Land Utilization Map of Manchuria" *Geographical Review* 20, no. 3 (1930): 482; John R. Stewart, "Japan's Strategic Settlements in Manchukuo," *Far Eastern Survey* 8, no. 4 (1939): 40.
[35] John R. Stewart, "Japan's Strategic Settlements in Manchukuo," *Far Eastern Survey* 8, no. 4 (1939): 40.
[36] Lee, 204; F.R. Eldridge, "Manchuria – The Race for New Resources," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 168 (1933): 97.

Empire of Japan.[37] Japan's was a multi-ethnic empire in which ethnic Koreans were distinguished legally and ethnically from Japanese nationals (fig. 2). T. Fujitani claims that all non-Japanese colonial subjects were considered to be "external to the core Japanese population" who were "Yamato ethnos."[38] This logic, that despite being subjects of Japan (or of Japanese nationals) in Manchuria, ethnic Koreans were not Japanese, formed the ideological and legal basis for treating Koreans as second-class citizens.

Legal framework	**Japanese nationals (subjects)**		**Foreign nationals (sojourners)**
	Persons from the mainland (*naichi*)	Persons from colonies (*gaichi*)	
Ethnic categories	Japanese (*nihonjin*)	Koreans (*chōsenjin*)	Foreigners (*gaikokujin*)

Figure 2. Classification of nationality and ethnicity in the Japanese empire. This chart demonstrates that the Song family, as Koreans (*Chōsenjin*) living in Dairen, were categorized as Japanese subjects. Nonetheless, they were persons from colonies in the Legal framework and *Chosenjin* in terms of Ethnic category, which means that they were not included in the core of Japanese nationals. Thus, Song family suffered the label of "second-class citizen" despite being an elite family in terms of occupations. Image from Chikako Kawasaki, "The Foreign Category for Koreans in Japan: Opportunities and Constraints," in Sonia Ryang and John Lie, eds., *Diaspora Without Homeland: Being Koreans in Japan* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2009), 127.

Having established the connection between the SMRC and Japan's empire and in light of this discussion of the social and legal status of ethnic Koreans in Japanese-occupied Manchuria, the unique position of Thomas Song's family in Japan's empire begins to take shape. Recall that Song U-Hon, after receiving a Japanese education, gained employment at the SMRC and relocated to Dairen in 1934 to work as a chief engineer for the company. Through

[37] Mo Tian, "The 'Baojia' system as Institutional Control in Manchukuo under Japanese Rule (1932-45)," *Journal of Economic and Social History of the Orient* 59, no. 4 (2016): 540; Chikako Kawasaki, "The Foreign Category for Koreans in Japan: Opportunities and Constrains," in Sonia Ryang and John Lie, eds., *Diaspora Without Homeland: Being Koreans in Japan* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2009), 126.
[38] T. Fujitani, *Race for Empire: Koreans as Japanese and Japanese as American during the WWII* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), 49.

his work at the SMRC, Song U-hon contributed to Japan's empire-building project. He cultivated younger Japanese engineers and was involved in the design of the SMRC express train Asia, a prominent symbol of SMRC technological prowess (fig. 3). For example, the following picture depicts the engineering team of SMRC, and Song U-hon was one of them.

Figure 3. This undated photograph shows Song U-hon with Thomas Song and co-workers in the SMRC engineering team. Song U-hon is sitting at the center with the younger Song at his side. They are pictured behind the SMRC express train "Asia" (あじあ) , which connected Dairen Station to Harbin Station and was a prominent symbol of SMRC technology. Song's father and his co-workers were involved in the development and construction of the express train "Asia." Courtesy of SPEC RARE.0195, Box 7 Folder 29, TGS Papers.

Despite his contribution to the empire, Thomas Song later recalled that Song U-hon's income and treatment within the SMRC did not match his knowledge or expertise. Despite having sufficient experience and professional knowledge as an engineer of high-speed trains in Dairen, Song U-hon was overlooked for promotion in SMRC because of his ethnicity. Thomas Song later wrote that the "irony was that those who were trained by my father later became his

bosses, simply because he was a Korean."[39] As was common throughout the Japanese empire, Song recalled that his father received lower pay compared to his Japanese co-workers, and that his mother's income was needed to cover the Song family's living expenses.

So Jong-Ah also worked for the SMRC until she opened her own clinic in 1939.[40] Thomas Song did not leave many documents detailing his mother's work with the SMRC hospital, so there is no way of establishing her contribution to the company from his papers. However, Hanchul Bae has found that So maintained solid social connections with "high-powered police and city officials, [which] made her very influential, including access to limousines and taxis,"[41] important status symbols at the time. Considering that she managed to earn a stable income from her private clinic until 1946, it seems likely that So Jong-Ah did have connections to the Japanese administrators of Dairen. This potential relationship with Japanese circles of power after 1939 notwithstanding, what is indisputable is that, like her husband, So contributed to the expansion of Japan's empire in Manchuria through her five-year tenure at the SMRC hospital by virtue of the company's importance to the Empire of Japan.

The work done by both Song U-Hon and So Jong-Ah for the SMRC indicates that Thomas Song's parents can be considered to have been elite collaborators in Japan's imperial project. However, as illustrated from Song U-hon's career trajectory at SMRC, the Song family was in a unique position in the social hierarchy—among the elite class of Koreans, but below their Japanese counterparts. In other words, the family was situated between Japan and Korea. Following Brook's model, this collaboration should not necessarily be understood as an either/or. Rather, individuals like Song and So can, and did, collaborate with imperialism. Simultaneously, as we will see in the next section, they also resisted.

C. Song's Parents as silent resisters

[39] Hanchul Bae, slide 17, "Thomas Gregory Song Family: Multi-Layered Identities and the Necessity of Multi-Level Evaluation," presentation by Hanchul Bae on May 1, 2020 at the Thomas Gregory Song Papers Fellows Final Presentation through Zoom in Columbus, Ohio.
[40] Song, *Chronology of Song of Eunjin in America.*
[41] Hanchul Bae, "Thomas Gregory Song Family: Multi-Layered Identities and the Necessity of Multi-Level Evaluation."

To understand the ways in which Thomas Song's parents resisted Japanese expansion requires a description of the cultural environment in which they lived. In the 1930s, Dairen was a multicultural port city and, compared to other cities in the Japanese empire, its social atmosphere was more tolerant of diversity. These conditions made the Song family's simultaneous collaboration/resistance feasible and played a significant role in the development of Thomas Song's in-between (Japan and the Catholic Church) identity as well.

Dairen grew as a colonial city of both the Russian and Japanese empires. In 1898, the Russian Empire gained the lease of the Liaodong Peninsula from the Qing Empire (1636 - 1911) and named the city Dal'niy (Дальний), meaning "far away." As the Russian empire competed with the Japanese empire to expand its sphere of influence into the Korean peninsula, it also advanced a national interest in maintaining control over an ice-free port in East Asia. In 1905, Russia and Japan signed the Treaty of Portsmouth ending the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905) and granting Japan a lease on the Liaodong Peninsula. Japan renamed the city from Dal'niy to Dairen (大連) and embarked on its own imperial urban planning in Dairen over the foundation of the Russian city. Consequently, Dairen had both Russian- and Japanese-designed areas and its architectural style incorporated a mixture of several elements. According to Annika C. Culver, "the odd mix of Russian, French, Chinese, and Japanese architectural details in a city based on concepts of space similar to those of European capitals contributed to a sense of defamiliarization for Japanese observers."[42]

The internationalization and openness of Dairen was symbolized not only by its history and architecture, but by the population and size as well. Dairen, according to Culver, became the "second-largest port in China after Shanghai through the soybean, cotton-goods, and agricultural trade" in the early twentieth-century.[43] In terms of population, Dairen was the "tenth-largest city in the Japanese Empire" and had a population of "661,354" in 1940.[44] Dairen

[42] Annika C. Culver, "The Making of the? Japanese Avant-Garde in Colonial Dairen, 1924-1937," *History Compass* 5, no. 2 (2007): 354-355.
[43] Culver, 349.
[44] Mizuuchi Toshio 水内俊雄 "Syokuminchi Toshi Dairen no Toshikeisei—Senhappyaku kyuujyuukyuu kara Senkyuhyaku yonnjyuugo" 植民地都市大連の都市形成—1899~1945 [Establishment of Dairen, a colonial city, 1899~1945], *Jinbun Chiri* 人文地理 37, no. 5 (1985): 441.

also enjoyed the fastest population growth rate within the Japanese empire. From 1920 to 1940, the population growth rate reached 32.7%.[45] In 1940, about 27.2% of the population were foreigners, the definition of which included people from Japanese colonies such as Chosen, Taiwan, and Manchuria.[46] These data exemplify the extent of Dairen's internationalization and the rapidity of the city's growth. It was against this multicultural backdrop that Thomas Song's parents were able to participate in some activities that could have been considered resistance against the Japanese empire.

In an essay published in 2001, Thomas Song claimed that his father had belonged to the local Esperanto society in Dairen and that the younger Song began learning Esperanto from his father while still very young and living in Tokyo. Song recalls that his father "read story books to [Song] every day after dinner in Esperanto, and [Song] learned how to read and speak naturally."[47] According to Song, his father "learned Esperanto as a student studying in Japan, and joined the Esperanto Society at present-day Yonsei University when it was established in 1922."[48] When the family moved to Dairen, his father frequently took Song to the meetings of the local Esperanto Society (fig. 4).

[45] Mizuuchi, 440.
[46] Mizuuchi, 442.
[47] Song, "Bokuni Totteno Gengo" 僕にとっての言語 [What does language mean to me], *Tosho Shimbun* 図書新聞, March 9th, 2002, SPEC RARE.0195, Box 12 Folder 6, TGS Papers.
[48] Thomas Gregory Song トーマス・ソング, "Bokuno Oitachi" 僕の生い立ち（中）[My personal history (two)], *Tosho Shimbun* 図書新聞, February 17, 2001, SPEC RARE.0195, Box 12 Folder 6, TGS Papers.

Figure 4. A group picture of Dairen's Esperanto Society. Song U-Hon, Song's father, is pictured standing fourth from the right in the center of the picture, and Thomas Song, the only child in this picture, is standing. This picture was taken on December 3, 1937 at the Company Club of the South Manchurian Railway (present-day Dairen Railway Cultural Palace). Courtesy of SPEC RARE.0195, Box 8 Folder 2, TGS Papers.

Esperanto's origins deserve some clarification to help explain how Song U-Hon's embrace of the language can be considered an act of resistance. Esperanto was created in 1887 to be an international language. Esperanto originated as a form of resistance against the Russian Tsar and, as it evolved, it carried this meaning of resistance along with claims to be seeking a common good for humanity. However, it represented "more than a language—perhaps a new initiative very much in line with other modernizing ideas opposed to Tsarist rule [in the Russian Empire]."[49] Thus, Song U-Hon's participation in the Dairen Esperanto Society might be one form of opposition to Japan's imperial project.

[49] Roberto Garvia, *Esperanto and Its Rivals: The Struggle for an International Language* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015), 67.

Other episodes also demonstrate that Song's parents' beliefs tended to favor Korean independence, even while they cooperated in Japan's extension of its empire. For example, after the collapse of the Japanese Empire in 1945, the Song family continued to live in Dairen. One day, Song's mother "painted a Korean flag, hosted it in front of her clinic," and said that "now our flag will gradually have meaning!"[50] As for his father, Thomas Song suggests that Song U-Hon maintained a close relationship with Hong Myong-Hui (洪命熹/홍명희, 1888-1968), a sympathizer of the Korean independence movement in Manchuria and novelist who went on to become Vice Premier of the Democratic Republic of Korea (North Korea). One day, Song U-Hon met with Hong and other advocates for Korean independence in Fengtian (present-day Shenyang). He recalled that "we had dinner in a room where we hoisted the Korean flag, sang the Korean national anthem together, and had a meal with tears."[51] After returning to the Korean peninsula in 1946, Thomas Song's father remained there until his death in 1975. During this time, he contributed to the construction of the Republic of Korea (South Korea) as a lecturer and a mechanical engineer at Seoul National University and as "the Chief of the Heavy Industrial Office of the Department of Interior, and an Administrative Partner of Yongsan Industrial Company."[52] These scenarios suggest that Song's parents protested the Japanese expansion silently, hiding their Korean nationalism in their inner-heart.

These examples illustrate a duality in Song U-Hon and So Jong-Ah's reaction to Japanese expansion. They suggest that Thomas Song's parents resisted covertly, hiding a sense of Korean nationalism in their inner-hearts, while also acting opportunistically in their collaboration with the Empire of Japan. In other words, when taken together, their cooperation with the SMRC and their secret acts of resistance illustrate simultaneous desire to oppose empire while collaborating with the imperial project. Thomas Song himself was only a child when the family lived in Dairen; but the position between ethnic Japanese and majorities of ethnic Koreans of the Song family in Japanese-occupied Manchuria also informed the

[50] Thomas Gregory Song トーマス・ソング, "Dairen Dassyutu to Seouru Jyou" 大連脱出とソウル（上） [Fleeing from Dairen and Seoul (one)], *Tosho Shimbun* 図書新聞, April 24, 2001, SPEC RARE.0195, Box 12 Folder 6, TGS Papers.
[51] Ibid.
[52] Thomas Gregory Song, *Chronology of Song of Eunjin in America*.

education of their eldest son. The next section examines the duality of Thomas Song's life as a Japanese subject receiving his education in a multicultural port city.

D. Thomas Song, The Product of Japanese and Western Education

Thomas Song was the product of imperial Japan and a Roman Catholic Church in Dairen. As discussed above, Dairen's society was shaped by international forces, so even as Song received a Japanese education in Manchuria, he was also exposed to Western philosophies and religion. Before discussing the ways in which these two cultures intermingled in Song's life, some background on the education system in Japanese-occupied Manchuria is necessary.

In October 1905, imperial Japan established the first Japanese primary school in Manchuria and the Home Affairs Department of the Kwantung Leased Territory (**関東州民生署**) began to compose regulations for the education for the education of Japanese children in the territory.[53] The regulations were implemented the following spring. The education system in Japanese-occupied Manchuria grew rapidly and, by 1931, there were "520 schools, 3471 professionally trained teachers and 92,585 students" participating in the education of Japanese subjects in the Kwangtung Leased Territory and other SMRC-controlled areas.[54]

The core of Japanese education in Manchuria was Japanization, or *Kominka* (**皇民化**). But how is Japanization best defined? According to Lü Ou, education in the Kwantung Leased Territory was a process of unifying "[Japanese] language and [Japanese] spirit."[55] Yuzo Yamamoto, a historian and economist at Kyoto University, explains Japanization as a

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[53] Sato Keiichi 佐藤恵一 "Manshu niokeru Eigokyoiku ~ Mantetsu no kyoiku oyobi Manshukokuno Kokutei Kyokasho" 満洲における英語教育：満鉄の教育及び満洲国の国定教科書 [Education in Manchuria: Curriculum by the South Railway Manchuria Company and nationally assigned textbooks], *Nihon Eigo Kyoikusi Kenkyu* 日本英語教育史研究 14 (1999): 173.

[54] Lin Leqing 林樂青 and Oshima Mana 大島まな "Chigokuniokeru Nihongokyoiku ni Kansuru Ichikosatsu: Dairensi no koutoukyoikukikanwo Chusinni"中国における日本語教育に関する一考察：大連市の高等教育機関を中心に [A study on Japanese-language education in China: higher education in Dairen City], *Kyuusyu Dai Kiyou* 九州大紀要 4, no. 3 (2014): 73.

[55] Lv Ou 吕欧 "KyuuManshu Nihongokyouiku to Syokuminchi Gengoseisaku nikansuru Ichikousatsu" 「旧満洲」日本語教育と植民地言語政策に関する一考察 [Investigation of Manchuria Japanese education and colonial language policy], *Hokuriki Daigaku Kiyou* 北陸大学紀要, no. 44 (2018): 68.

"movement to solidify the national spiritual mobilization."[56] In other words, the objective of *Kominka* was to use Japanese language, culture, and values to implant the Japanese spirit (*Yamato damashī*) on imperial subjects so they would achieve spiritual unification. Of these, language was the most direct approach.

To achieve Japanization, Japanese-language education became a vehicle for Japanese linguistic imperialism. Linguistic imperialism assumes that "language planning can extinguish a language and can produce a monolingual population speaking the dominant language."[57] The Japanese empire used the mandatory Japanese curriculum as a tool to replace the native languages of colonies and to further unify its empire. Situated within the Japanese empire and Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere (大東亞共営圏), Manchukuo (1932 - 1945) also adopted this program of Japanization through education. Officially, Manchukuo was a multi-national state in which multiple languages (including Mandarin, Manchu, and Mongol) could be spoken, but Japanese operated as the "primary language (第一言語)" in the territory.[58] Song received an education designed to promote Japanization and his recollections of this experience provide insight into the system's efficacy.

Despite the stated goal of Japanese education in the colonies to promote unity within the empire, Song remembered tension between himself and his Japanese classmates (fig. 5). In 2001, Song recalled that, while in junior high school he had entertained, and openly expressed, some "politically incorrect thinking" that made him the target of bullies. For example, while everyone else was confident that imperial Japan would triumph over the Allied Forces, Song remembered publicly disagreeing and announcing that "Imperial Japan would eventually collapse, and the Emperor was not a god-like figure."[59] This type of "unpatriotic" (非国民

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[56] Yamamoto Yuzo 山本 有造 "Kindai Nihonteikoku Ni Okeru Syokuminchi Shihai no Tokusitsu" 近代日本帝国における植民地支配の特質 [The Japanese Empire: a comparative view], *Keizai Shirin* 経済志林 73, no. 4 (2006): 104.

[57] M. J. Rhee, "Language Planning in Korea under the Japanese Colonial Administration, 1910 – 1945," *Language, Culture, and Curriculum* 5, no. 22 (1992): 89.

[58] Ozawa Yusaku 小沢有作 "Nihon Syokuminchi Kyoiku Seisaku Ron: Nihongo Kyoiku Seisakuwo Chushinni Shite" 日本植民地教育政策論—日本語教育政策を中心にしてー [On educational policy of Japanese colonies: in discrimination and education], *Jinbun Gakuhou* 人文学報 82, no. 4 (1971): 4.

[59] Thomas Gregory Song トーマス・ソング, "Shiffa Shinpu" シッファー 神父 [Father Schiffer], *Tosho Shimbun* 図書新聞, February 3, 2001, SPEC RARE.0195, Box 12 Folder 6, TGS Papers.

Hikokumin)" speech was not conducive to harmony between Song and his Japanese classmates and resulted in his isolation.

Figure 5. A group picture of Song's classmates and teachers at Dairen Middle School (大連中学校). This picture suggests that ethnic Koreans, a minority in Manchuria, were put into the same environment as ethnic Japanese and received the same formal education. Unfortunately, I could not identity Thomas Song from this picture, but I suppose that Song must be one of these students, because this picture is from Song's personal album on his childhood. Courtesy of SPEC RARE.0195, Box 7 Folder 23, TGS Papers.

Japan officially embraced a policy of assimilation of Koreans via the education system (同化, *Dooka*). When Song was in third grade at the Komeidai Primary School, he was the only ethnic Korean in his class. Song recalls that Mr. Ando, his teacher, implored his classmates not to discriminate against ethnic Koreans. In an essay published in *Tosho Shimbun* in 2001, Song commented that "Mr. Ando did so, perhaps, because he just followed the policy of assimilating ethnically Korean into Japanese cultural contexts, but because of his kindness, I was not bullied

by any of my classmates."[60] Song's experience in Dairen's Japanese education system illustrates the ways in which the system attempted to encourage assimilation and draws attention to its limitations.

However, what is also clear from Song's papers is that his education did result in linguistic assimilation. Thus, in 1945, when the Soviet Red Army occupied much of Manchuria, Thomas Song provided translation services for So Jong-Ah's private clinic to treat injured Soviet soldiers. Because Thomas and his brother Albert addressed their mother in Japanese as "Kaa-Chan (かあちゃん)" (meaning "Mom"), the Soviet soldiers also referred to her as "Dr. Karchan," misinterpreting "Kaa-Chan" as her name.[61] It is also known that Song U-Hon and So Jong-Ah embraced Japanese as the primary language for communication with their sons.

Song's experience with the Japanese educational system demonstrates the effects and limits of Japanization. Although he studied in the same classrooms as Japanese students and appears to have been assimilated linguistically, he nonetheless recalls having remained separate from his classmates. Understanding the Western aspect of Song's duality requires more attention to the decisions of his parents to embrace the multiculturalism of Dairen and the role of the Roman Catholic Church in his broader education. Song's official education may have been Japanese, but he was hardly cloistered from non-Japanese ideas and values.

Growing up in Dairen, Song was exposed to Western religion, thoughts, and information from an early age. For example, Song frequented a Roman Catholic church in Dairen. In addition to instructing the young Song on Western ideas, mathematics, sciences, and foreign languages, the parish priest was a source of stability in a tumultuous era. Song remembered that "during WWII, Fushimidai Church was the only place that I could cling on

[60] Thomas Gregory Song トーマス・ソング, "Syogakusei no Ando Sensei" 小学校の安藤先生 [Mr.Ando in my primary school life], *Tosho Shimbun* 図書新聞, March 31, 2001, SPEC RARE.0195, Box 12 Folder 6, TGS Papers.
[61] Thomas Gregory Song トーマス・ソング, "Dairen Dassyutu to Seouru Jyou" 大連脱出とソウル（上） [Fleeing from Dairen and Seoul (one)], *Tosho Shimbun* 図書新聞, April 14, 2001, SPEC RARE.0195, Box 12 Folder 6, TGS Papers.

to."[62] Beyond the church, Song also gained exposure to non-Japanese ideas by accompanying his father to events hosted by the local Esperanto society in Dairen. These experiences allowed him to make Western friends and engage with Western thoughts, creating the conditions for his dual nature. As he grew up in the international port city of Dairen, Song began to embrace Western philosophies and faith instead of the Japanese *Kokoku-Shikan* (皇国史観).[63] This aspect of Song's informal education begins to explain the reasons for his disagreements with Japanese classmates over the fate of the empire.

To summarize, by establishing a definition of collaboration based on Timothy Brook's model and by examining the Song family's interactions with the Japanese empire, this section has shown how Thomas Song's parents embraced simultaneous collaboration and resistance to Japanese expansion. After establishing the apparently divided loyalties of Song U-Hon and So Jong-Ah, it shows that the Songs' development took a different course under the influence of Dairen's multi-ethnic and multi-cultural environment. Like his parents, Thomas Song embraced some aspects of Japanese culture but resisted complete assimilation—embracing Western values instead.

IV. Conclusion

This project has shown that, as an elite ethnic Korean family, the Song family's high socioeconomic and occupational mobility was a strategy to adopt to a new social order and pursuit of educational opportunities. Its pursuit of official and unofficial experience in Manchuria demonstrate simultaneous collaboration with and resistance to Japanese imperialism. Thomas Song's family had occupied an elite position in Korean society for generations and his parents were able to take advantage of living within the borders of the expanding Japanese empire to secure their own status and livelihoods. Song U-Hon and So Jong-Ah's positions in colonial society resulted from their opportunistic cooperation with

[62] Thomas Gregory Song トーマス・ソング, "Shiffa Shinpu" シッファー 神父 [Father Schiffer], *Tosho Shimbun* 図書新聞, February 3, 2001, SPEC RARE.0195, Box 12 Folder 6, TGS Papers.
[63] *Kokoku-shikan* (皇国史観) is a view of Japanese history that emphasized that the continuation of the Japanese imperial family, as well as the existence of the Emperor of Japan, is the center of Japanese history. This view has been the justification of uninterrupted history of Japan despite the fact that governing systems have switched several times and the Japanese emperor has been deprived of real political power by aristocrats, war lords and Shogunate. After the Meiji Restoration, nationalism was integrated into the *Kokoku-Shikan*.

Japan's imperial project, but, according to Thomas Song, they also participated in covert acts of resistance against Japanese expansion. They lived a dual existence as collaborators and resisters. Thomas Song also developed a dual nature that reflected limited buy-in to the Japanese imperial project. His, however, was informed by receiving a Japanese education while embracing Western philosophies and religion. While the Song family's experience may not be representative, it stands as a useful example of how one elite family embraced mobility as a strategy to achieve socioeconomic status while taking advantage of new opportunities afforded by political turmoil. At the same time, the Songs' self-interested collaboration with the empire did not discount simultaneous acts of resistance.

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